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Commission on the Status of Women
Fifty-fourth session
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Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session and its contribution to shaping a gender perspective in the realization of the Millennium Development Goals

Statement by the Association nationale Al Hidn, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Statement

In its fifty-fourth session, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will review the outcome of the plan which it has formulated and implemented, which aims to improve the status of women, permitting them to live in dignity and enjoy their existential position. CSW will also review the reports, supported by statistics and figures, which will be submitted by official and civil authorities, which will highlight the fact that many goals have been achieved. However, on reflection it is apparent that there are various matters which must be taken into consideration in the forthcoming stage: matters that regard the true sense of what it is to be human and one's existential role.

We must move from focusing on women as objects to focusing on women as fundamental elements and actors in drawing up global economic and political policies. This must also be the case when drawing up military policies, which impact on women, despite the fact that women are uninvolved in them except as a means of implementation.

Every day, thousands, including soldiers and resistance fighters, fall victim to expansionist and imperialist wars. When their families are taken into account, the victims number in the millions, including thousands of women who are widowed, as well as persons who are disabled and impoverished. Women bear the consequences and become economic mainstays, carers and political negotiators. Furthermore, they face homelessness and forced expulsion, widowhood, hunger and poverty and are denied their distinct female identity and psychological needs.

Focusing on women as objects, while emphasizing freedoms and the rights of women to do as they please with their bodies, exposes them to the risk that they will be exploited because of their circumstances by prostitution networks that traffic in women and girl children and by sexual predators that travel the world as tourists in order to abuse children and exploit girl children. The causes of such discrimination are ignored: the politics of war, the exclusion of women from the process of formulating global finance and labour policies, their exclusion from formulating clear policies for world peace and co-existence, and from policies for cooperation without oppression or domination, and without killing or making people homeless.

The forthcoming stage must see a change in plans and programmes. Rather than focusing only partially on the status of women, more emphasis must be placed on women's choices vis-à-vis their rights and on cultural and religious diversity. Plans and programmes must also focus on women's roles as major actors in re-evaluating humanity and the global human dimension of world civilization. When formulating public policy, women must have effective roles:

- In formulating and implementing policy decisions;
- In the field of scientific and ecological research;
- In re-evaluating the family as a fundamental building block for the creation of a balanced society, and empowering the family with psychological, social and economic tools.